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THE
DISCIPLINE
OF THE
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Society of
OF
NORTH-CAROLINA YEARLY MEETING.

REVISED, 1869.

GREENSBORO:

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NOTE.—The figures appended to some of the paragraphs denote the respective years in which they were issued by the Society.

INTRODUCTION.

In the morning of the gospel day, the apostles and disciples found it necessary to meet together for the consolation and strength one of another ; when, pursuant to the nature and design of the gospel, which brings peace on earth and good will to men, a care arose for the edification of the church ; and that all, being of one family, might be of one mind.

And as it hath pleased the great Head of the church to gather us as a branch of His church, and to inspire us with a measure of the same universal love and good will, by which was ushered in the dispensation of the gospel, we are engaged not only to meet together for the worship of God, but also for the exercise of a Christian care over each other, for the preservation of all in unity of faith and practice, answerable to the description which He, the ever-blessed Shepherd, gave of his flock, "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John xiii : 35.

For this important end, and as an exterior hedge of preservation to us, against the many temptations and dangers to which we are exposed,

the following Rules, which have been occasionally adopted by the Society, now form our code of Discipline. In the exercise whereof, it is to be observed, that if any member be found in conduct subversive of its order, or repugnant to the testimonies with which we believe we are entrusted for the promotion of truth and righteousness, it becomes our indispensable duty to treat with such in Christian meekness and brotherly compassion, without unnecessary delay or improper exposure; according to the direction of our Lord to His church, "if thy brother shall trespass against thee go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother: but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican." Matthew xviii: 15, 16, 17.

This is the extent of the censure of the Society against irreclaimable offenders, and whilst we disown them from being members of our religious community, it is recommended to be done in such a disposition of mind as may convince them that we sincerely desire their recovery and restoration. From the right exercise hereof, we believe no degree of persecution or imposition can be justly

inferred ; for the imposition rests on the part of those who (as has sometimes happened) insist on being retained as members, whilst at open variance with our religious body, either in principle or practice.

For the more regular and effectual support of the order of the Society, it will be observed, that besides the usual meetings for the purpose of divine worship, others for the exercise of our Discipline are instituted, subordinate to each other ; all of which are either immediately or remotely accountable to the Yearly Meeting. These meetings have distinct allotments of service, and experience has abundantly shown, that when this service is attended to in uprightness and dedication of heart, with a single eye to the honor of our holy Head, and the benefit and edification one of another, in the love wherewith He hath loved us, our assemblies are favored with His aid and direction.

Although this code of Discipline is printed for the use of our own Society, yet should it meet the public eye, it is not doubted but the serious and candid reader will observe, throughout the whole, the earnest endeavors of the Yearly Meeting for the promotion of virtue and religion.

And whilst we earnestly recommend this work to the notice and regard of Friends, we are not without a clear prospect that an acquaintance with

the letter of our Discipline, will be insufficient to produce the desired effect, unless, in the exercise thereof, we are careful to move and act under the immediate influence of the spirit of Christ, in the pure love of the gospel.

May we, therefore, in our meetings for the exercise of the Discipline, humbly seek to be clothed with the spirit of wisdom and charity; this will divest the mind of a dependence on our own strength and abilities, endow us with patience and condescension towards each other, and being preserved in fellowship agreeably to the declaration of our Lord, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," a qualification will be experienced in our several stations and movements, to build up one another in that faith which works by love, to the purifying of the heart.

In conclusion, we desire in an especial manner, that our youth, of the present and succeeding generations, may be early and fully instructed in our religious principles, and in the nature and design of our Christian Discipline; and through divine assistance be enabled to adorn our holy profession by a conversation and conduct consistent with godliness and honesty; thereby avoiding the reproach which many, through a defection in principle, or a degeneracy in practice, have brought, both upon themselves and the religious body of which they profess to be members.

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

*From an Epistle addressed by George Fox and others
to the Governor of Barbadoes, 1671.*

We do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God, who is the Creator of all things both in heaven and in the earth, and the Preserver of all that He hath made; who is God over all, blessed forever; to whom be all honor and glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and for evermore! And we do own and believe in Jesus Christ, his beloved and only begotten Son, in whom He is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the express image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him. And we do own and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; and that He was crucified

for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of His Father, for our justification; and we do believe that He ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God. This Jesus, who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we do believe that there is no other foundation to be laid but that which is laid, even Christ Jesus; who, we believe, tasted death for every man, and shed his blood for all men, and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world; according as John the Baptist, testified of Him, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," John i. 29. We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, even the Captain of our salvation, (who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works;) who is the Seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, to-wit, Christ Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. That He is (as the Scriptures of truth say of Him) our wisdom and righteousness, justification and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved. It is He alone who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls; He it is who is our Prophet, whom

Moses long since testified of, saying, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people," Acts iii. 22, 23. He it is that is now come "and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true." And He rules in our hearts by His law of love and life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. And we have no life but by Him; for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, by whose blood we are cleansed, and our consciences sprinkled from dead works, to serve the living God. And He is our Mediator, that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and us offending: He being the Oath of God, the new covenant of light, life, grace and peace: the Author and Finisher of our faith. Now this Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly man, the Emmanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in; Him whom the high-priest raged against, and said He had spoken blasphemy; whom the priests and the elders of the Jews took counsel together against, and put to death; the same whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason; who also gave large money to the soldiers

to broach an horrible lie, namely, that his disciples came and stole Him away by night whilst they slept. And after He was risen from the dead, the history of the acts of the apostles sets forth how the chief priests and the elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus, for preaching Christ and his resurrection. This, we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ, whom we own to be our life and salvation.

We do declare, that we do esteem it a duty incumbent on us to pray with and for, to teach, instruct and admonish those in and belonging to our families, for whom an account will be required by Him who comes to judge both quick and dead at the great day of judgment, when every one shall be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil—at that day, we say, of the resurrection both of the good and of the bad, of the just and the unjust, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power; when He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.” 2 Thess. i. 7—10. See also 2 Pet. iii. 3, &c.

Extract from Yearly Meeting Epistle, 1830.

We believe God has not only provided the means of reconciliation unto himself, through the sacrifice of Christ; he hath also through the same compassionate Saviour, granted unto us the gift of the Holy Spirit. By this, the patriarchs, and the holy men of old who lived under the law, walked acceptably before God. Its more plentiful effusion, and its powerful and life-giving effects were distinctly foretold by the ancient prophets. Christ himself declared that it was expedient that he should go away, that he might send the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who should guide into all truth; in allusion to whose coming he also said, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." To be guided by his Spirit is the practical application of the Christian religion. It is the light of Christ which enlightens the darkness of the heart of man; and, by following this light, we are enabled to enjoy and maintain communion with him. The children of God are led by the Spirit of God; and this is the appointed means of bringing us into that state of "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." It is not a doctrine of mysticism, but one of practical piety. The great office of the Holy Spirit, we firmly believe to be, to convince of sin, to bring the soul to a state of deep and sincere repentance, and to effect the work of sanctification. A holy and con-

stant watchfulness is required, to preserve the mind alive to the guidance of this divine Teacher, who, if diligently sought after and waited for, will be found to be a swift witness for God in the soul, producing that tenderness of spirit, and that quickness of understanding in the fear of the Lord, which are essential to our growth in grace.

It is through Him whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, that we obtain pardon for sin; and it is through the power of his Spirit working mightily in us, that we come eventually to experience freedom from sin.

From the General Epistle, 1861.

The gift of the Spirit is a special promise of the new covenant. The Saviour expressly declared, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever." The light that shines into man's heart is not of man, and must ever be distinguished both from the conscience which it enlightens, and from the natural faculty of reason, which, when unsubjected to its holy influences, is, in the things of God, very foolishness. One with the Father and with the Son, the Holy Spirit works for the regeneration of fallen and rebellious man. Coming in the name and with the authority of the ascended Saviour, He remains to the Church the

most precious pledge of the power and continued care of its exalted King. Not merely as the enlightener of the conscience, and the reprover for sin, is the Spirit mercifully granted, but also, in an especial manner, to testify of and to glorify the Saviour; to apply, with sanctifying efficacy to the soul, his words and work when upon earth and his mediation and intercession for us in heaven. Hidden and often very gradual as may be the work of the Spirit, it produces a real and most effectual change; and as obedience keeps pace with knowledge, the believer is privileged to receive more and more of the fulness which is in Christ. But let it never be forgotten that every increase of light and experience, how much soever connected with his usefulness to others, is also for the furtherance of the work in his own soul. He is taught by the Spirit to look unto Jesus; that, "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord," he may be "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Can we enough meditate upon these heavenly truths, revealed for the very purpose that they may be understood and enjoyed? What encouragement do they afford us to seek to live as worshippers in the inner sanctuary, in nearness to God, in childlike faith, in loving obedience, walking in the Spirit?

Beloved friends, ye who in the riches of the Father's love have been partakers of the heavenly calling, may you receive with faith and thanksgiving, yet with a solemn sense of your responsibility, the words of the Apostle, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One." Let the anointing which ye have received of Him abide in you, we entreat you; cleansing, guiding, sanctifying; causing you in all things to grow up into Him who is the Head. The cross-bearing follower of Jesus, who sits in penitential love and holy hope at his feet, knows most of this precious anointing. In such the fruits of the Spirit are brought forth; not only conviction for sin, repentance and faith, but love, joy, peace, the sense of pardoning mercy, an humble reliance on sanctifying grace, the disposition of heart which finds its continual satisfaction in loving, serving and pleasing God; and, to crown all, the blessed hope of finally resting and worshipping with the general assembly and church of the first-born who are written in heaven.

HOLY SPIRIT.

Friends, as a society, have ever held and taught that a mere historical belief of the doctrines of the gospel, (the birth, life, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, mediation, intercession, atonement and divinity of the Lord Jesus,) is unavailing; but, that the heart-changing and

sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit or Comforter is to be looked for and abode under, to seal these precious truths on the understanding, and give to each one a living and practical interest in them—so that his followers might really know Christ to be their Saviour and Redeemer, and that he had indeed come into their hearts and set up his righteous government therein.

They believe in the Holy Spirit or Comforter, the promise of the Father, whom Christ declared he would send in his name, to lead and guide his followers into all truth, to teach them all things and to bring all things, whatsoever he had said unto them, to their remembrance. A manifestation of this Spirit, they believe is given to every man to profit withal; that it convicts for sin, and as attended to, gives power to the soul to overcome and forsake it; it opens to the mind the mysteries of salvation, enables it savingly to understand the truths recorded in the holy scriptures, and gives it the living, practical and heartfelt experience of those things which pertain to its everlasting welfare. They believe that the saving knowledge of Christ and God cannot be attained in any other way than by the revelation of this Spirit.

They believe that by His Spirit, a manifestation of which is communicated to every man, God invites, exhorts, and strives with every man in

order to save him; which light or grace, as it is received and not resisted, works the salvation of all, even of those who are ignorant of Adam's fall and of the death and sufferings of Christ. As many as resist not the light of Christ Jesus, but receive and walk therein, it becomes in them a holy, pure and spritual birth, bringing forth holiness, righteousness and purity—by which holy birth, viz: Jesus Christ formed within us by his Spirit and working his works in us, as we are sanctified, so we are justified in the sight of God; according to the apostle's words, "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Respecting the communion of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Society of Friends believe that it is inward and spiritual—a real participation of his divine nature through faith in him, and obedience to the power of the Holy Ghost, by which the soul is enabled daily to feed upon the flesh and blood of our crucified and risen Lord. Of this spiritual communion, the breaking of bread and drinking of wine by our Saviour with his disciples we believe was figurative—the true christian supper being that set forth in the words of Revelations: "Behold I

stand at the door and knock ; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me."

BAPTISM.

As there is one Lord, and one faith, so there is but one baptism, of which the water baptism of John was a figure. The baptism which belongs to the gospel, the society of Friends believes, is "not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." This answer of a good conscience can only be produced by the purifying operation of the Holy Spirit, transforming and renewing the heart, and bringing the will into conformity to the divine will. The distinction between Christ's baptism and that of water is clearly pointed out by John : "I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," &c.

In conformity with this declaration, the society holds that the baptism which now saves is inward and spiritual ; that true Christians are "baptised by one spirit into one body ; that as many as are baptised into Christ have put on Christ ;" and, "that if any man be in Christ he is a new creature ; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new and all things of God."

HOLY SCRIPTURES.

We have always believed that the Holy Scriptures were written by divine inspiration: that they are able to make "wise unto salvation thro' faith which is in Christ Jesus;" for as "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," they are therefore "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." But as we freely acknowledge that their authority does not depend upon the approbation of any church or assembly, so neither can we subject them to the fallen, corrupt reason of man. A true understanding of the divine will, and spiritual meaning and application of Holy Scripture, can not be discerned by the natural, but only by the spiritual man; it is therefore by the assistance of the Holy Spirit that they are read with instruction and comfort.

We have always asserted our willingness, that all our doctrines and practices be tried by them; and admit it as a positive maxim, "That whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil."

We tenderly and earnestly advise and exhort all parents and heads of families, to instruct their children and families in the doctrines and pre-

cepts of the Christian religion as contained in the Holy Scriptures; and that they incite them to the diligent reading of those inspired writings, which plainly set forth the miraculous conception, birth, holy life, wonderful works, blessed example, meritorious death, and glorious resurrection, ascension and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To educate their children in the belief of these important truths, as well as in the belief of the inward manifestation and operation of the Holy Spirit on their own minds, that they may reap the benefit and advantage thereof, for their own peace and everlasting happiness; which is infinitely preferable to all other considerations. (1732.)

MEETINGS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Advised that Friends, though meetings are sometimes held in silence, would not neglect their attendance; for the hungry soul will labor for bread, and the thirsty for the water of life; and the diligent hand will make rich in that treasure which is of an enduring substance. 1724. P. E.

In your religious meetings for the worship of God, both on the first and other days of the week, be diligent to wait on Him, whereby you may renew your strength, and witness Him your sufficient help; for surely many of us have cause thankfully to remember his early visitations in

the assemblies of his people, where He broke in upon our hearts with his power and love, and did, in the needful time, administer help, comfort and counsel; whereby, in the renewings thereof, we have been upheld in a faithful testimony, and in the discharge of our duty to Him. 1725. P. E.

In all your meetings for the worship of Almighty God, let your deportment be such as may demonstrate, that you are in earnest in the great duty of waiting upon and worshipping God in spirit; that serious and tender-hearted inquirers may be encouraged to come and partake, in your assemblies, of that inward and spiritual consolation and refreshment, which the Lord is graciously pleased to impart to the souls of such as are humbled in his sight, and approach his holy presence with reverence and fear. 1744. P. E.

Although the labors of such as are called forth by the Spirit of Christ, and instructed thereby rightly to divide the word of truth, are highly serviceable in the church; yet the aim and design of every true gospel minister is to direct the minds of all to the divine teachings of the Holy Spirit, and to wait upon, and have their whole trust and expectation on, the Lord alone. And as the religious strength and communion, both of preachers and hearers, consist in their united dependence on the power and Spirit of Christ, their guide and leader; so where any part of that dependence is

broken off from Him, the Holy Head, and placed on any instrument or member of the body, it hath been sometimes experienced to become a weight or burden on such instrument, and a real impediment to its present service. Wherefore, brethren, we beseech you that, in all your assemblies for the worship of God, your eye be single unto Him, your expectation fixed on Him alone, and your faith standing in his power and Spirit; thus may you grow and be established therein, and be made one another's strength in the Lord.

And let the hearers be watchful over their own spirits, and not forwardly judge or censure the testimonies which may be delivered amongst them; for if they be not very careful and diligent in attending upon the Lord in meetings, they are liable to mistake in the judgment they may pass on the ministry. Now this being a matter of great moment, for the preservation of love and concord in the churches, and knowing the danger and ill consequences which attend a hasty and censorious judging of the ministry, we think it necessary to caution friends, not to let their own spirits sway them, but to let the Spirit of God rule and reign in their hearts; for this will preserve all in sweetness and tenderness one towards another. 1731.—1753. P. E.

We tenderly exhort such as, through fear of neglecting their temporal concerns, or other con-

siderations, are kept from a due attendance of meetings for worship, seriously to consider that gracious promise left upon record: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Some of us have to testify, that our outward affairs have not suffered, by giving up our time, the few hours set apart for religious worship; but, on the contrary, our minds have been thereby greatly strengthened to come up with propriety in the duties we owe to God, to our families, and to all mankind. Let us call to remembrance the zeal of our honorable predecessors, who, when they had great reason to expect they should be driven into noisome and pestilential prisons, sent into banishment, or subjected to other grievous sufferings, for meeting together on no other account than to worship God according to their conscience; yet, in the strength of that holy faith and love which supported them in suffering, failed not constantly to keep up their meetings at the hazard of all and expense of many of their lives, liberties and properties. 1758. P. E.

"Where two or three," saith our Lord, "are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." In these words, He invites us not only to meet one with another, but in so doing, with Himself also. Shall the King of kings, and Lord of lords, condescend to offer his divine pres-

ence for our good, and shall we, his dependent creatures, set so light by his inestimable kindness, as, either wilfully or negligently, to let slip those precious seasons, wherein we might receive his blessed assistance so necessary to our help and salvation? Shall the poor, perishing gratifications of sense and self-love, or any inconveniences of a trivial nature, be suffered to prevent our dutiful attendance upon Him, in whom alone stands our everlasting interest? Shall a cloudy sky, a little wet, a little cold, a little ease to the flesh, a view to a little earthly gain, or any common incident, furnish an excuse for declining this duty and thereby depriving ourselves of the blessed advantage, often vouchsafed to the faithful, of enjoying heavenly communion together in spirit, with the Lord of life and glory? 1765. P. E.

They who are obedient to this universal injunction of our Saviour, "Watch," are prepared for the due fulfilling of every duty; and eminently so, for that most essential one of worship. How many feel themselves languid, when assembled for this solemn purpose, for want of a previous preparation of heart? The mind, crowded with thoughts on outward things in approaching the place for public worship, and resuming them with avidity on its return, is not likely to fill up the interval to profit; and to such, their meeting together may prove a form as empty as any of those

out of which, we believe, truth called our forefathers, and still calls us. 1800. P. E.

A punctual attendance at the hour appointed for public worship is a matter of no small importance. If we hurry away from our outward occupations to the meeting-house, thinking that, by the delay of a few minutes, we shall not be long behind our brethren, we are in great danger of having our thoughts employed on that in which we have been engaged, and of interrupting that holy silence which, it is believed, would often prevail, if all the members of a meeting were assembled not only in one place, but at one time, with one and the same great object in view. 1821.

MINISTRY.

A liberty was enjoyed during the purest ages of christianity, for any person moved by the Holy Spirit of God to preach the doctrine of the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ freely; and of which they were not deprived till great corruptions of doctrine and practice were found amongst the professors of christianity, and the civil powers were prevailed upon to meddle with the consciences of the people which of right are to be subject to God only. 1735. P. E.

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” The freedom of gospel ministry and the liberty of all the living members of the christian

church to exercise the gifts bestowed upon them by its Holy Head, have been among the most prominent testimonies of our religious Society. In the fear of God our early friends protested against the exercise of authority over conscience in matters between man and his Creator, and against the assumption by any one individual to act as the sole agent for the people in their assemblies for divine worship. We believe that this arrangement, by which the conducting of services in a christian congregation rests with the minister, and the hearers are precluded from the exercise of spiritual gifts in the public worship of God, is a departure from primitive christianity. In regard to these things, beloved friends, accept the word of earnest exhortation: Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. 1843. P. E.

In the earliest period of the christian church the Spirit of God was, agreeable to ancient prophecy, poured upon servants and upon hand-maidens; and we believe that He continues to call from the young and from the old, from the unlearned and from the poor; from the wise and from the rich, from women as well from men, those whom he commissions to declare unto others the way of salvation. The servants of Christ, who labor in the ministry are to be highly esteemed for their works sake, and when they leave their

outward avocations, at His call, to preach the gospel, their outward wants should be cheerfully supplied, if needful; yet we consider the gift of the ministry to be of so pure and sacred a nature, that no payment should be made for its exercise, and that it ought never to be undertaken for pecuniary remuneration.

As the gift is free the exercise of it ought to be free also, in accordance with the precept of our Lord, "Freely ye have received, freely give." We think that all payments to ministers of the gospel for their services are calculated in their effects to obstruct the faithful ministration of the word—to hinder the honest declaration of the whole counsel of God, in the authority of Him who is given to be Head over all things to his church.

It is the prerogative of Christ Jesus our Lord to choose and to put forth His own ministers. A clear apprehension of scripture doctrine or a heart enlarged in love to others, are not of themselves sufficient for this work. Whatever may be the talents or scriptural knowledge of any, unless there be a distinct call to the ministry our society cannot acknowledge it; and except there be a sense of the renewed putting forth and quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, we believe it to be utterly unsafe to move in this office.

Let all who are called to exercise the Lord's gifts, in the ministry, be very watchful to know

both the outflowing, and the staying of the anointing oil. We desire that our views as to the spirituality of divine worship, the authority and qualification for the ministry of the gospel and the mode of holding our meetings for worship, may continue to be faithfully maintained.

PRAYER.

In the sacred writings no duty is more clearly set forth than that of prayer. Prayer is the aspiration of the heart unto God ; it is one of the first engagements of the awakened soul, and we believe that it becomes the clothing of the minds of those whose lives are regulated by the fear and love of their Creator. We continue to believe that our disuse of set forms of prayers is founded on a correct view of the spiritual nature of the gospel dispensation. At the same time we are persuaded that all who have a just sense of the value of their immortal souls, and of their own great need of help from above, must rejoice with thankfulness, in knowing and in feeling that they may pray unto our Father who is in heaven. Oh, then that every one may, with a sincere and believing heart and with reverential awe, approach the throne of grace, trusting in the mediation of Him through whom we "have access by our spirit unto the Father."

May we all draw nigh unto God in prayer—ask

the assistance of his grace to help in time of need—and look unto Him as our merciful Father who is in heaven; assuredly believing that as He is approached in reverence and faith He will graciously answer our petitions, and supply all our need in and through Jesus Christ. As this sacred duty, so forcibly enjoined in Holy Scripture, is correctly understood and performed aright, parents will become so sensible of its great value to themselves, that they will feel the importance of turning thereto the attention of their beloved offspring; and as they seek for wisdom and strength to act rightly herein, they will be assisted by Him to whom they should desire that they and their children may be wholly dedicated. 1830.P.E

NORTH-CAROLINA YEARLY MEETING.

From ancient records it appears that a few Friends, from Great Britian, settled in the Albemarle district, now Perquimmans County, where about the year 1708, the Yearly Meeting was established. Some years after it was removed to Centre, and from thence, about the year 1791, it was removed to New Garden, where it is now permanently located, and is composed of Friends of North-Carolina and Tennessee; and is opened at 11 o'clock, A. M., on 2nd day after the 1st first day of 11th month.

DISCIPLINE.

MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

The connection and subordination of our meetings for discipline are thus : Preparative Meetings are accountable to Monthly ; Monthly to Quarterly ; and Quarterly to the Yearly Meeting. So that if the Yearly Meeting be at any time dissatisfied with the proceedings of any subordinate meeting ; or a Quarterly Meeting with the proceedings of either of its Monthly Meetings ; or a Monthly Meeting with the proceedings of either of its Preparative Meetings,—such meetings ought, with readiness and meekness, to render account thereof when required.

It is agreed that no Quarterly Meeting be set up, or put down, without consent of the Yearly Meeting ; no Monthly Meeting without consent of the Quarterly Meeting, nor any Preparative, or other meeting for business or worship, till application to the Monthly Meeting is first made, and when there approved, the consent of the Quarterly Meeting be had also. Clerks to said meetings shall be appointed annually.

It is directed, that a book be provided by every Monthly and Quarterly Meeting, and fair minutes

kept therein, of all matters which such meetings shall deem necessary to be recorded. Monthly Meetings, particularly, are advised to attend to, and finish all business with care and dispatch; that it may, at no time, suffer by improper delay. And if any case, under consideration, prove too weighty or difficult for them to determine, they should apply to their respective Quarterly Meetings for assistance. It is the sense of this meeting, as a general rule, in all cases, that when any Monthly or Quarterly Meeting has occasion for, and requests copies of any of the papers, minutes, or records of another Monthly or Quarterly Meeting, that the same be granted.

Each Monthly Meeting should appoint a suitable number of Friends to attend the service of the Quarterly Meeting, with such written reports, signed by the clerk, as may be given them in charge. Also, a suitable number of Friends should be appointed by each Quarterly Meeting, to attend the service of the Yearly Meeting. And it is earnestly advised and desired, that all Friends who submit to these or any other services of the society, may be punctual in their attendance thereto: or if prevented by sickness, or any other unavoidable occurrence, that they will be careful to send information thereof. Also, that those who are under appointments to meetings, do not withdraw therefrom, before the conclusion, with-

out obtaining the meeting's consent. It is the judgment of the Yearly Meeting that our meetings for discipline exercise discretionary power in keeping them select.

WOMEN'S MEETINGS.

Recommended, that women Friends continue to hold Preparative, Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meetings, in separate apartments; and therein to have the care and oversight of their own sex, and exercise the discipline relative thereto, and request the judgment and assistance of men Friends when they think it necessary.

OVERSEERS.

It is the recommendation of the Yearly Meeting, as productive of very beneficial consequences to society, that in every Monthly Meeting a proper number of faithful and discreet Friends be appointed to the station of Overseers within the same; whose duty it is to exercise a vigilant and tender care over their fellow-members, and to render accounts to Monthly Meetings when required; and also to inform the Monthly Meeting of all orphans and others, belonging to the same, who need guardians; and, on such information, the meeting is to appoint a committee to examine their situation, and promote suitable persons to the guardianships.

CERTIFICATES.

When Friends are about to remove from one Monthly Meeting to another, they ought to apply to the Monthly Meeting to which they belong for certificates of membership; and such Meeting, if nothing appear to obstruct it, ought to grant such applicants certificates, setting forth their right of membership, directed to the Monthly Meetings within the limits of which they are going to reside. And when a person receives a certificate of removal, if it be not accepted by the Monthly meeting to which it is directed, nor returned by the individual as a resident, within twelve months from the date thereof, the Monthly Meeting which granted the certificate may disown such, unless some satisfactory reason be given.

If any in profession with us remove without first applying for certificates, and have not otherwise misbehaved, the Monthly Meeting shall send certificates to the Monthly Meeting within the limits of which they may reside, certifying their right of membership. If such have otherwise misbehaved, and have removed without the acknowledged limits of any Monthly Meeting, the Monthly Meeting may disown them; and if within the limits of any Monthly Meeting, may forward a certificate with a statement of such misbehavior, to such Monthly Meeting as they may have removed to, which Monthly Meeting may deal with

or disown them. If any move to a Monthly Meeting, of any other Yearly Meeting, a statement of such misbehaviour should be sent to said Monthly Meeting without a certificate, and the Monthly Meeting to which such person may have removed, should be requested to deal with the offender, and forward the result of their labor to the Monthly Meeting from whence the offender came. All Monthly Meetings are to receive certificates sent to them, or forward the same to their Quarterly Meeting for its final decision whether the certificate shall be received or not.

All certificates of removal, prepared for women Friends, after being considered in their meeting, are to be sent to the men's, and if there approved, signed by both clerks.

When apprentices or persons under age, are under the necessity of going from one place to another, their parents or guardians, masters or mistresses, should apply for certificates for them, recommending them to the care and oversight of the Monthly Meeting to which they remove.

When approved ministers or elders move from one Monthly Meeting to another, they are to have certificates, setting forth their station and the unity Friends have with them therein. But when elders remove out of the limits of the Yearly Meeting they have not a right to a certificate of their eldership, but only as other members.

QUERIES.

It is agreed that once in the second and third quarters each, succeeding the Yearly Meeting, the first five of the following queries, and once in the quarter immediately preceeding the Yearly Meeting, all of them be read, deliberately considered, and answered in the Preparative, Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, and an explicit account, in writing, conveyed to each Yearly Meeting :

Query 1. Are Friends diligent in their attendance of meetings for worship and discipline seasonably, and do parents and heads of families encourage their children and those under their care in this christian duty, and is good order maintained therein ?

Query 2. Are love and unity preserved among you ? and do you discourage all tale-bearing and detraction ? and when differences arise, are endeavors speedily used to end them ? and is due care taken, when any thing appears amiss, that the rules of our discipline be timely put in practice ?

Query 3. Do Friends keep to plainness and moderation in every part of their conduct ? And do those who have children endeavor to train them up in the principles of our religious profession, to reading the Holy Scriptures, and use the necessary restraints for their preservation ?

Query 4. Are Friends clear of the use of intox-

icating liquors as a drink, of distilling, or having them distilled, importing or vending them? Are they careful to guard against frequenting taverns and places for diversion? or are they concerned in gaming or lotteries? and do they bear a faithful testimony against war?

Query 5. Do Friends faithfully maintain our testimony to a free gospel ministry, agreeably to our discipline?

Query 6. Are Friends clear of oppressing or defrauding their laborers? and do they endeavor to encourage them in a virtuous life?

Query 7. Are Friends careful to live within the bounds of their circumstances? do they avoid launching into trade or business beyond their abilities? are they just in their dealings, and punctual in fulfilling their engagements? or are they concerned in any fraudulent or clandestine trade?

Query 8. Are the necessities of poor Friends relieved, and care taken for the education of their children? Are the rights of Friends' children neglected, or they placed from amongst us without consent of the Monthly Meeting?

Query 9. Do any commence a suit at law or equity, against a member contrary to discipline, without consent of the Monthly Meeting?

Query 10. Is every family of Friends furnished with a copy of the Holy Scriptures? and is it

their practice to read a portion thereof daily in a collective capacity with a devotional pause ?

Query 11. What ministers and elders recorded, and how many have deceased during the year ? What was their age, and how long have they occupied those stations ?

Query 12. What is your number of families and parts of families, and of members, male and female ?

Query 13. What number of additions by conviction during the year ? And what new meetings either indulged or established ?

ADVICE.

Directed that the following advice be read over after the queries, in a solemn, deliberate manner, and carefully attended to, and answered in writing annually :

Advised, that Friends be careful to keep wills by them.

That public gifts or legacies be applied to the uses intended by the donor.

That they be careful to pay due regard to the First day of the week as a day of rest and devotion.

That they avoid the unnecessary use of tobacco in every form, and that they discourage the use of the same by their children and those under their care.

That Friends keep proper records of marriages, births and deaths.

That early care be taken to advise such as appear inclinable to marry contrary to our rules, or with too near kindred.

And we recommend that Friends everywhere behave themselves orderly, both in their converse and commerce, so as to answer the witness for truth in them with whom they are concerned.

UNANSWERED QUERIES.

In order to realize the benefit of serious self-examination, and to induce an earnest concern for the good of others, the four following queries are to be read in our Meetings for Discipline ; to be then seriously and deliberately considered, but not answered : each once in the year, at such time as they may choose :

Query 1. What is the religious state of your meeting ; and is there among you evidence of a growth in the truth ?

Query 2. Are you individually giving evidence of true conversion of heart ; of love to Christ, and self-denying devotedness to Him ; and of a growing preparation for the life to come ?

Query 3. Do you exercise a judicious, religious care over your younger members, manifesting an earnest concern that, through the power of divine grace, they may all become established in the faith and hope of the gospel ?

Query 4. Do you maintain a watchful care against conformity to the world ; against the love

of ease and self-indulgence, or being unduly absorbed by your outward concerns to the hindrance of your religious progress; bearing in mind that "here have we no continuing city?"—*London Discipline.*

MINISTERS AND ELDERS, AND THEIR MEETINGS.

The ministers and elders of each Monthly Meeting, should meet once in three months, at such time and place as the Monthly Meeting may direct, in the capacity of a Preparative Meeting of ministers and elders, when the queries addressed to such meetings are to be read, and answers made to them, signed by the clerk, and conveyed to the ensuing Quarterly Meeting of ministers and elders, by a suitable number of representatives. And in the said Quarterly Meetings, the queries are also to be read, and the answers from the respective Preparative Meetings, and the state of the members weightily considered; and once a year, those answers comprised in a report, signed by the clerk, are to be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders, by representatives appointed for that purpose. In this meeting, the queries are also to be read, and the answers from the several quarters; and the state of this part of society, being thus collected and considered, advices adapted thereto, may, if requisite, be issued to the subordinate meetings of the like kind.

None of said meetings of ministers and elders are, in any wise, to interfere with the business of any Meeting for Discipline; nor is the Yearly Meeting for ministers and elders to suffer its adjournment to interfere with the sittings of the Yearly Meeting for discipline.

When any concerned Friend has frequently appeared in our religious meetings, as a minister, and the Preparative Meeting of ministers and elders apprehend it seasonable, the subject should then claim the attention of the Monthly Meeting for discipline of which the person is a member, it may here be opened, by a member of said Preparative Meeting, when, if the Monthly Meeting, after deliberate consideration, shall unite in believing that a gift in the ministry has been committed to him or her, a minute expressive thereof should be forwarded to the Quarterly Meeting; where the case being solidly weighed and concurred in, information thereof should be sent to the Preparative Meeting of ministers and elders, of which the person is to be a member. And, until the approbation of the Quarterly Meeting is obtained, no such Friend is to be received as a minister, or permitted to appoint meetings without consent of the Monthly Meeting to which the individual belongs.

When any recorded minister apprehends it to be his or her duty to travel in Truth's service,

within the limits of any part of this Yearly Meeting, said minister is to open the concern in the Monthly Meeting and obtain a minute of unity and concurrence, directed to Friends in the parts proposed to be visited. And if they propose to pay a general visit to all the Quarterly or other Meetings belonging to the Yearly Meeting, they must also have consent of the Quarterly Meeting. Likewise, if any minister propose to visit one or more Yearly Meetings on this continent, he or she should also obtain a certificate of unity and concurrence of the Monthly Meeting where he or she belongs, and also have consent of the Quarterly Meeting. And when the service is accomplished the said Monthly Meeting ought to be informed and the certificate returned without unnecessary delay.

No minister may go beyond sea to Europe, or to the West Indies, with liberty to appoint meetings going and returning, without the concurrence of the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders, and the Yearly Meeting at large.

Friends are advised to be cautious of receiving travelling Friends without certificates.

If any shall oppose a ministering Friend, whether recommended or not, in his or her preaching or exhortation, keep on the hat, or show any remarkable dislike to such, when engaged in prayer, let them be speedily admonished, in such.

manner as may be requisite; unless the person against whom the uneasiness is expressed, has been disowned, or his or her appearance disapproved by the Monthly Meeting.

On the contrary, when any have aught against what has been publicly delivered, they are to speak to the party privately and orderly.

When there is occasion for the appointment of one elder or more in any meeting, a proposal of name or names should be offered to the Monthly Meeting, and a committee appointed to inquire into the unity Friends have with forwarding such to that station. If, upon due consideration, the nomination is approved, a minute should be made and a copy thereof forwarded to the Quarterly Meeting, and, if there concurred in, the person or persons are to be appointed to that station.

When any acknowledged member of the select meeting shall, at any time, be thought, by negligence or otherwise, to have lost his or her service in that station, so as to become burthensome, (yet not so as to be under the care of the Monthly Meeting for discipline, for misconduct,) it is advised, that timely and tender care be extended to such, according to gospel order; and if such care prove ineffectual, that some discreet Friend lay the same before the Monthly Meeting of which he or she is a member, and if the meeting concur therewith, that the subject be forwarded to the

Quarterly Meeting, for its approbation and discontinuance of such Friend from that station, which is to be certified to the meeting of ministers and elders.

QUERIES FOR MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

The Yearly Meeting directs that once a quarter, excepting that following each Yearly Meeting, the following queries, for the use of the select meeting, be read and answered, and distinct answers sent to the like Quarterly Meeting, in order that a summary may be made out for the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders :

Query 1. Are ministers and elders careful to attend all their meetings in due time, taking their families with them, as circumstances will admit ? and are they good examples in waiting therein ?

Query 2. Are ministers and elders, in the exercise of their gifts, careful to wait for divine ability ; and are they sound in the doctrines of the christian religion ?

Query 3. Are the lives and conversation of ministers and elders clean and blameless among men, ruling their own houses well and being exemplary themselves ?

Query 4. Are minister and elders in unity one with another, and with the meeting to which they belong ? and do none overcharge themselves with business to the hurting of their service ?

Query 5. Do you watch over one another for good? and are you careful to help those who are exercised in the ministry, in the right line thereof?

MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.

Previous to the year 1824, there were standing committees appointed by the Yearly Meeting from time to time, to attend to Society concerns during the recess of the Yearly Meeting. In that year a Meeting for Sufferings was instituted by the appointment of members within the limits of New Garden, Deep River, Western and Southern Quarterly Meetings, the other Quarters are each to appoint three members, as correspondents, who, when in attendance, are to have equal privileges with those appointed by the Yearly Meeting. The meetings are to be held the second 2nd day in the Fourth month, and the sixth day previous to the Yearly meeting, at such place as the Yearly Meeting may designate.

The following directions are to be observed by the Meeting for Sufferings :

1st. It shall keep minutes of its proceedings and lay them annually before the Yearly Meeting.

2nd. Fifteen members shall constitute a meeting capable of transacting business.

3rd. Four members may call a special meeting when they shall judge it necessary.

4th. Provided a vacancy, occasioned by the

decease or removal of a member appointed either by the Yearly or Quarterly Meeting, should not be seasonably supplied, the Meeting for Sufferings is to notify the meeting of such death or removal, in order that the vacancy may be filled by a new appointment.

The services confided to the Meeting for Sufferings are :

1st. In general to represent the Yearly Meeting and act on its behalf in cases where the interest or reputation of our religious Society may render it necessary.

2nd. To have the oversight and inspection of all manuscripts prepared to be printed relative to our religious profession or testimonies, and to promote or discourage the publication of them at their discretion, to reprint and distribute any writings, which they may judge would be useful, and when expenses are incurred in the execution of these duties, they are to draw on the treasurer of the Yearly Meeting for the amount.

3rd. To inspect and ascertain titles to land and other estates belonging to any of our meetings, and attend to the appropriation of charitable legacies and donations.

4th. To receive from the Quarterly Meetings such memorials concerning deceased Friends as shall be forwarded, that after the necessary inspection and correction, they may be laid before

the Yearly Meeting, unless in some cases the Meeting for Sufferings should on solid consideration judge it inexpedient.

5th. To extend such advice and assistance to persons under suffering for our testimonies as their cases may require and apply to the Government or persons in authority, on those and other occasions as they may judge necessary.

6th. To correspond with other Meetings for Sufferings as occasion may require.

All approved ministers and members of other Meetings for Sufferings are at liberty to attend the sittings of this meeting.

MARRIAGE.

The holy covenant of marriage was ordained by our All-wise and Beneficent Creator, and is therefore "honorable in all." When entered into in the counsels of Divine wisdom, it is eminently calculated to purify, increase, and elevate our comforts and our joys, and to soothe and alleviate our sufferings, and our sorrows, through our pilgrimage and probation in the journey of life. And it is pre-eminently conducive to our advancement in virtue and usefulness, both in the church and in the world; and if the unerring Guide is sought and obeyed, the parties become the most efficient help-meets to each other, both in the relations and duties pertaining to this life, and in

the all-important work of preparation for death, and for the judgment to come.

But when this important engagement is unadvisedly entered into, with secular or sordid motives, there is great danger that the anticipated joy will prove transient, affliction or adverse casualties soon demonstrating that such hopes of happiness were built upon sand, or placed upon objects which are in their nature unworthy, and perish with the using, or elude the eager grasp. And the connection being for life, a gloom often overspreads the pathway, the prospect becomes appalling, hope is blighted, and the unhappy subjects are liable to be hurried by despair into the gulf of ruin.

We do therefore advise and entreat that all may be seriously impressed with the importance of the subject, and be engaged in prayer for preservation from premature entanglements, and the influence of improper motives.

“It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps,” but “if any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.” Therefore we would pressingly encourage all, not to defer until their affections become fixed, but primarily to spread the case before the Lord, in prayer, asking for that wisdom which is profitable

to direct, and maintaining a cheerful submission to the manifestations of His will.

Look not to worldly gain, but to religious principle and mental endowment, remembering that if you are not united in Christian faith, the most essential element of a happy connection is wanting.

The vital essence of marriage is the uniting of the parties in reciprocal affection, which we do believe is the Divine prerogative; and under this influence, the union is so complete that our blessed Saviour testified, saying, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh;" adding in confirmation of the forementioned prerogative, "What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

Notwithstanding the conjugal unity is of the Holy One, yet it is reasonable and right that all marriages should be publicly legalized, in a solemn, becoming manner. For which purpose, we recommend the following simple, but dignified and appropriate rules:

The parties desiring to proceed in marriage may inform the Preparative Meeting of which the woman is a member, which shall forward the proposition to the ensuing Monthly Meeting. Provided, that one week or more shall intervene between the time of holding said meetings.

If any have objections to the proceeding, they should inform the Overseers.

The proposition shall be minuted in both men's and women's Monthly Meeting. If either party is a minor, consent of parents or guardians must be given to the Meeting; and we advise all to consult their parents before entering into marriage engagements.

If the man is a member of another Monthly Meeting, the Meeting should be satisfactorily certified of his membership and clearness of marriage engagements with others. If the woman is a widow, having children, the Monthly Meeting must be satisfactorily informed that their rights have been legally secured.

If any objections have been presented to the Overseers, which they shall judge reasonable, they should inform the Meeting, and a committee should be appointed to investigate, and report, when the Meeting may dismiss, or proceed in the case, as shall appear right.

If no obstruction appears, the parties should be left at liberty to accomplish their marriage, according to our rules.

The marriage shall be solemnized in a regular mid-week meeting, or at a meeting appointed by the Monthly Meeting, at the request of the parties.

Towards the conclusion of the meeting, the parties are to stand up, and taking each other by

the right hand, declare audibly and in a solemn manner, to the following effect, the man first, viz: "In the presence of the Lord, and before this assembly, I take D. E. to be my wife; promising, with divine assistance to be unto her a loving and faithful husband, until death shall separate us." And then the woman in like manner: "In the presence of the Lord, and before this assembly, I take A. B. to be my husband; promising, with divine assistance, to be unto him a loving and faithful wife, until death shall separate us."

Or, if preferred, the following ceremony may be used, viz: "I take —— to be my (wife, or husband, as the case may be,) in the holy covenant of marriage."

The marriage certificate should then be read, as follows:

. "A. B., of —— in the County of —— State of ——, son of C. & H. B., and D. E., daughter of F. & G. E., of ——, having proposed marriage with each other, in a religious meeting of the Society of Friends, held at ——, and the case being considered by a Monthly Meeting of said Society, held at ——, and no obstructions appearing, they were liberated to accomplish their marriage.

"And these presents may certify whom it shall concern, that in consummation thereof, they appeared in a public meeting of said Society, held

at — on the — day of — month, A. D. —, and then and there took each other as husband and wife, in the holy covenant of marriage; and did to these presents set their hands, she, according to the custom of marriage, adopting the name of her husband.

And we whose names are hereunto subscribed, being present, did, as witnesses thereto, set our hands, the day and year above written."

When any, not in membership with us, are so far convinced of our principles, as to desire the accomplishment of their marriage according to our rules, the same procedure may be allowed as when both are members, the Monthly Meeting noting the fact of non-membership on its records.

Every Monthly Meeting should appoint a Recorder of marriage certificates; and a Committee should be appointed to attend the solemnization of marriages, select a Friend to read the marriage certificate, place it in the hands of the Recorder, and report. And Friends are advised carefully to avoid all unnecessary parade on such occasions and extravagance at the entertainment.

It being abundantly evident that the offspring of persons near of kin are much more frequently weak-minded, idiotic, or deformed, Monthly Meetings should not receive proposals of marriage from any so near as first cousins, or the children of half brothers, or half sisters.

Monthly Meetings are encouraged to visit, by committees, our members, soon after their marriage, for their help and encouragement, at this important period, as much depends on the early adoption of religious habits.

And if any accomplish their marriage contrary to our wholesome rules, they should be tenderly treated with, and encouraged not to forsake the regular attendance of our religious meetings, but endeavor to live in accordance with our christian profession.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

In case of parents making application for their children to be received into membership, if Monthly Meetings are fully satisfied concerning the clear convincement of such parents, they may receive such children in minority into membership. If only one of the parents come in by request, their children should have no right in society, till Monthly Meetings are free to receive them by their own or their parents request; but if parents have both been members after marriage and one of them be disowned, and they have children afterward, such children should be looked upon as having full right in our society. It is farther the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that no illegitimate child should be considered as having a birth-right in our society.

PLAINNESS.

It is earnestly desired that all our members keep themselves and their children which are in minority, in moderation and plainness in gesture, speech, apparel and furniture of houses ; and it is hoped that when any deviate from the above advice, that Friends will be strict in wisdom, to take prudent care therein ; and if such pious care and endeavors prove ineffectual, Monthly Meetings may disown them.

POOR.

It is advised that the case of all indigent Friends may be duly inspected, advice and relief may be seasonably afforded, their necessities relieved, and prudent care taken for the education of their children by the Monthly Meeting.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS.

As inconvenience may arise from a want of due attention to keeping regular records of births and deaths, it is enjoined upon each Monthly Meeting to appoint a careful Friend, whose duty it shall be to keep, in a book provided at the expense of the Monthly Meeting, a record of all marriage certificates, births and deaths within its limits, which shall be offered to him for that purpose. And Monthly Meetings are required to appoint a committee once a year, to see that such records are made, and report to the Monthly Meeting.

Friends are also enjoined to maintain our testimony against affixing superfluous monuments, of any description, to graves; and that they avoid the custom of wearing or giving mourning habits and all extravagant expenses, on account of the dead.

MEMORIALS.

If any Monthly Meeting should, upon solid consideration, believe it would be profitable to prepare a memorial concerning a deceased member, such memorial is to be sent to the respective Quarterly Meeting, where it is to be farther considered and, if there approved, is from thence to be sent to the Meeting for Sufferings, in order for inspection and approbation, previously to its being laid before the Yearly Meeting, and if there approved, it is to be recorded in a book of memorials.

BOOKS.

It is the sense of the Yearly Meeting, that no member of our Society shall print or publish any book or writing, having a tendency to excite disunity or discord; nor on any religious subject, without the perusal and approbation of the Meeting for Sufferings. And if any shall print or publish any such book or writing, without the consent of said Meeting, they are to be complained of to the Monthly Meeting to which they belong, and

unless they condemn the same to the satisfaction of said Meeting, to be disowned.

CHARITY AND UNITY.

It is advised, that when any appearance of dissension, variance, or resentment, shall be discovered among our members, the parties be tenderly apprised of the danger to which it exposes them and others, and exhorted to mutual condescension and forgiveness; and if any, notwithstanding such admonition, manifest an implacable animosity, the overseers, or other solid Friends of the Monthly Meeting to which they belong, should be informed thereof, and labor farther with them; and if they still prove inflexible, they should be disowned, as out of the unity of the body.

MODERATION AND TEMPERANCE.

It is earnestly recommended to our members, to guard against the use of intoxicating liquors, and distilling, or having them distilled; importing, vending, or giving them at vendues to excite bidding; and if any proceed in either of the practices aforesaid, to the dissatisfaction of the Monthly Meeting to which they belong, said Meeting is to extend labor and advice in the matter, as it may think best; and if such members neglect, or refuse the counsel of their friends, they are to be disowned.

CONDUCT AND CONVERSATION.

If any in membership with us should be guilty of lying, cursing, swearing, drunkenness, or any other scandalous, or immoral conduct, they should be labored with by overseers or other concerned Friends, and if they be brought to a sense of the iniquity thereof, they should, without improper delay, remove the scandal by acknowledging and condemning the offence, to the satisfaction of the Monthly Meeting to which they belong. But if any such offenders refuse so to acknowledge and condemn their evil conduct, the said Meeting ought speedily to testify against them.

If any of our members deny the divinity of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, redemption through His blood, the immediate revelation of the Holy Spirit, or the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, as it will be thereby manifest that they are not one in faith with us, the Monthly Meetings where they belong, after earnest and christian labor as in other cases of offence for their reclamation without effect, ought to declare the same, and issue their testimony accordingly.

It is the earnest concern of the Yearly Meeting that in all our dealings and transactions amongst men, strict justice may be observed, and that no motives of pecuniary interest may induce any of our members to impose upon any with whom they may have commercial intercourse; and it is

directed that Monthly Meetings be careful to extend suitable admonition against all deviations in these respects for the help and recovery of delinquents; and as it is obvious that there can be no just pretensions to religious rectitude, without a conformity to moral justice, Monthly Meetings are authorized to disown those who will not be reclaimed by their brotherly endeavours in these respects.

We would affectionately and earnestly advise all our members against connecting themselves with any secret societies, or joining in any ostentatious procession thereof.

Believing that meekness, moderation and mercy are among the distinguishing traits of the christian character, we are concerned to caution our members against the indulgence of passion or the exercise of cruelty even towards the brute creation.

CONVINCED PERSONS.

It is directed that the following order be observed respecting persons who apply for admittance into membership:—They are to apply to the overseers, or other discreet Friends, who are to lay the case before the Preparative Meeting; and after that meeting is fully satisfied by paying a visit, or otherwise, they are to lay it before the Monthly Meeting; and if said meeting is not free

to receive them at that time, it is to appoint some suitable Friends to inquire into the lives and conversation of the applicants, and also to take solid opportunities of conference with them, in order to understand whether their motives for such request are sincere, and on the ground of conviction, and report their sense ; with which, if the meeting is satisfied, a minute should be made, signifying the acceptance of such into membership. Neither the men's nor the women's meeting may receive or disown members, without consent of the other's meeting. Such as have once been members and have been disowned, are, if they wish to join in society again, to request as other applicants.

If any member, not having violated the discipline, should request to be released from membership, the Monthly Meeting may grant and record such release, after the proper care, by the appointment of a committee or otherwise, to retain them proves unavailing.

TRADE.

This meeting recommends to all our members, that they be careful not to venture on such business as they do not understand, or to involve themselves in trade beyond their abilities to manage ; but that they bound their engagements by their means ; and when they give their words or

enter into contracts, that they endeavor, on all occasions, strictly to fulfil them.

And that Friends be cautioned against purchasing any kind of prize goods, or running any contraband goods from any port, or being concerned in any fraudulent or clandestine trade. And if any depart from the counsel of their friends in those respects, they should be speedily treated with for their restoration ; and if such treatment prove ineffectual, they should be disowned.

DEFAMATION AND DETRACTION.

Friends are exhorted to maintain a strict watch over themselves and one another, against the subtle and mischievous spirit of tale-bearing and detraction ; the manifest tendency of which is to lay waste the unity of the body, by sowing the seeds of disesteem, strife and discord among brethren and neighbors. It is advised, therefore, that in whomsoever this weakness appears, it may be immediately checked, and if persisted in, let such offenders be faithfully admonished ; and unless they give due satisfaction, the Preparative Meeting should be informed and deal farther with them ; when if that produce not the desired effect, the Monthly Meeting should proceed to disown them. And if any members who offend in this respect, should shelter themselves under pretence that they say no more than what they have heard

from others, but will not discover who they are, such reporters or tale-bearers should, in like manner, be dealt with and disowned, as being themselves the authors.

GAMING AND DIVERSIONS.

It is advised that a watchful care be exercised over our members, to prevent their going to stage plays, taverns, horse-races, music and dancing, or any such sports and pastimes; or being concerned in lotteries, wagering, or any species of gaming; and if any of our members fall into those practices and cannot be prevailed on by private labor to decline them, the Monthly Meeting to which the offenders belong, should be informed thereof, and if they be not reclaimed by farther labor, to proceed to disown them.

DAYS AND TIMES.

As we are persuaded that no religious act can be acceptable to God, unless produced by the influence and assistance of His Holy Spirit, it is our judgment, that our members cannot consistently join with any in the observance of public fasts, feasts, or what are termed holy days, or such injunctions and forms as are devised by the will of man in regard thereto: for, though exterior observances of a similar kind were authorized under the law, yet they who come to Christ, will assuredly find, that in Him all shadows end

and, therefore, when any in membership with us, do join with any of the above mentioned observances, that they be admonished to a more circumspect conduct, and, if they will not refrain, Monthly Meetings are to disown them.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

We have ever maintained that it is our duty to obey all the requirements of civil government, except those by which our allegiance to God is interfered with.

Liberty of conscience being the common right of all men, and particularly essential to the well-being of religious societies, we hold it to be incumbent upon us to maintain it inviolably amongst ourselves; and therefore exhort all in profession with us, to decline accepting any office or station in civil government, the duties of which are inconsistent with our religious principles, or in the exercise of which they may be, or apprehend themselves to be under the necessity of exacting from others any compliances against which they are conscientiously scrupulous.

If any persons in membership with us, notwithstanding the preceding admonition, shall persist in a conduct so repugnant to our principles, they should be treated with, as in other cases of offence, and if they cannot be brought to see and acknowledge their error, the Monthly Meetings to which

they belong should proceed to testify against them.

It is also our judgment, that Friends ought not in any wise to be active or accessory in electing, or promoting to be elected, their brethren or others to offices or stations in civil government, the execution whereof tends to lay waste our Christian testimony, or subject their brethren or others to sufferings on account of their conscientious scruples. The Spirit of Christ calls us out of contention, it even seeks not its own ends by means productive of animosity, much less, therefore, should professors indulge themselves in strife for objects of a perishing nature.

LAW.

It is the sense and judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that if any in membership with us, disregarding the gospel order, prescribed by our Discipline, shall arrest, or sue at law or equity, any other members of any meeting, except in the cases admissible under the head "Arbitrations," without first obtaining leave of the Monthly Meeting of which the complainant is a member, they, in so doing, depart from the peaceable principles of which we make profession; and if, on being treated with, by the Monthly Meeting to which they belong, they cannot be prevailed upon to withdraw the suit and pay the costs of it, they should be disowned.

ARBITRATIONS.

When differences arise between our members in regard to their property, they are to proceed in the following manner: The party who thinks himself or herself aggrieved, should, in the first place, calmly and kindly request the other to comply with the demand; and if this be refused, the complainant himself, (or agent, if residing at too great a distance,) should take with him one or two overseers, or other discreet Friends; and, in their presence, repeat the demand.

If this step also fail, and the matter appear a plain account or bond, against which no reasonable objection is made, the party complained of should be advised to settle it without farther trouble; but if there appear difficulty in the matter under dispute, or unsettled difference in accounts, or other reasonable objections, the parties should be advised to choose a suitable number of Friends as arbitrators, or Monthly Meetings may appoint them.

Should this proposal be acceded to, the arbitrators ought, as speedily as circumstances will admit, to appoint a time and place, and attend to the business without unnecessary delay,—giving the parties a fair and full hearing in the presence of each other, but listening to neither of them apart, nor suffering their own sentiments to be known abroad till they have fully digested the

subject and come to a clear decision ; which they should be careful to do within the time agreed on.

But if either of the parties refuse the counsel of Friends in the matter under dispute ; or when arbitrators are chosen, neglect to give his or her attendance when desired, without assigning sufficient reasons ; or not abide by their award when issued ; in either of these cases, the person so offending should be complained of to the Monthly Meeting of which he or she is a member ; and if the brotherly endeavors and admonitions of Society, in this capacity, fail to produce a conformity to justice in the case, the Meeting should proceed to disown the offender, unless such person make it evident that the award or proceedings have been erroneous or unjust ; in which case the matter in dispute may be referred to the same, or other arbitrators as the Meeting shall judge best, and their award shall be final. After which, if either of the parties prove so regardless of peace and unity, as not to acquiesce in such confirmed or corrected determination, the Monthly Meeting to which he or she belongs, should disown the person so refusing.

That arbitrators may better answer the end of their appointment, and be helpful in conciliating the minds of the parties, they ought not to consider themselves as advocates for those by whom they are chosen, but as men whose duty it is to

“judge righteously, fearing the Lord.” They should shun all previous information respecting the case; or, having heard any thing of it, remain, as much as possible, unbiased thereby. They should reject no evidence, nor receive any, but in the presence of both parties.

And whereas there may be some circumstance, even in disputed matters, wherein the foregoing equitable mode of proceeding cannot be complied with; such as the party absconding or leaving the country with design to defraud his or her creditors; or apparent danger of bankruptcy, and other creditors generally coming on, which would occasion damage to the claimant, by the time it would take to pursue the above method; or where there may be danger of future damage, as in case of executors, administrators, trustees and legatees; it may, therefore, be necessary, and it is directed, that Monthly Meetings, where such things happen and which, on due inquiry appear truly such, hold excused such as shall, in the before mentioned cases in this paragraph, appear to them really necessitated to proceed at law or equity. And in case of executors, administrators, trustees and legatees, where it shall appear to the Meeting that the matter is of importance, and that our friendly way would be unsafe, such may be permitted to have the matter tried at law or equity; also in cases concerning the titles of land,

with this caution,—“that parties on both sides behave toward each other in brotherly love, decency and moderation ;” which will be a becoming testimony in courts, and show that nothing but the nature of the case, and our station in common with others under the law of the land, take any of us there.

As it may sometimes occur, that a member, either for want of a clear understanding of the business, or through improper influence, may present a complaint against another ; in such case, the overseers, after fully hearing both parties, and being decidedly of opinion that the case does not require a reference, are to advise a speedy settlement of it ; when, if that be ineffectual, and the complainant remain dissatisfied, he or she may have liberty to inform the Preparative Meeting of which the other is a member, that “having a matter in dispute with one of its members, he or she is desirous of assistance in settling it.” The said meeting is then to appoint a judicious committee to inquire into the propriety of leaving the matter to arbitration ; if they judge that the complaint ought to be referred, they are to advise that it should be submitted accordingly ; but if they concur in judgment with the overseers, the complaint is to be dismissed.

If any Preparative Meeting thinks any matter too weighty or inconvenient for it to manage, it

may move it to the Monthly Meeting, which is to proceed in the same manner as directed to Preparative Meetings.

It is the advice of the Yearly Meeting, that our members who differ on account of worldly affairs, avoid, as much as possible, choosing Friends in the Ministry as arbitrators.

OATHS.

If any in membership with us shall be guilty of swearing before legal authority, or of administering an oath, instead of our approved, privileged, and ancient manner of affirming,—as it is a deviation from our principles, such ought to be treated with; and if they do not come to a sense and acknowledgment of their error, Monthly Meetings should disown them.

SLAVERY.

As a religious Society, we have found it to be our indispensable duty to declare to the world, our belief of the repugnancy of slavery to the christian religion. It, therefore, remains to be our continued concern to prohibit our members from holding in bondage our fellow men. And we earnestly desire, that all persons in the employment of any of our members, may be treated with kindness, and instructed in the principles of the christian religion; also, encouraged in such

branches of school learning as may fit them to become useful members of civil society.

WAR.

Friends are exhorted faithfully to adhere to our testimony against wars and fightings, and in no way to unite with any in warlike measures, either offensive or defensive, or in carrying guns for defending their ships, or persons, or going with letters of marque :—that by the inoffensiveness of our lives, we may convincingly demonstrate ourselves to be the real subjects of the Messiah's peaceful reign.

And if any deviate from this our ancient testimony, or approve, or show the least connivance at war, by attending at muster-fields or viewing military operations; or in any wise encouraging the unstable, deceitful spirit of party; illuminating their houses in token of rejoicing for victory obtained in war; or by joining political devices or associations; they are to be tenderly dealt with, and if they cannot be brought to acknowledge and forsake their error, Monthly Meetings should disown them.

TAVERNS.

We think it necessary to caution all our members against frequenting taverns, and other places of public resort; and it is the judgment of this Meeting, that none of our members engage in

tavern-keeping, or any such employ, for a livelihood. And if any are in danger on those accounts they should be timely and tenderly treated with in order to convince them of their danger, and if they cannot be prevailed upon to desist, they should be disowned.

TESTIMONIES.

It is the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that offenders who incline to make acknowledgment of their offences, may prepare the same in writing and therein particularize the matter or matters charged upon them, and show it to the overseers, or committee appointed in their case, and if the purport should be judged to be suitable to the occasion, such may present it to the Monthly Meeting.

STOCK.

A stock having by experience been found useful for the occasions of the society, it is desired by the Yearly Meeting, that the same be occasionally renewed, by a collection from each Quarter, in the proportions which may, from time to time, be determined by the Yearly Meeting; and that it be continued in the hands of the treasurer appointed by the Meeting, and be subject to be drawn out by its direction, or by the Meeting for Sufferings, as the exigencies of society may require.

APPEALS.

Whilst the Yearly Meeting, in granting an appeal, considers it a precious privilege, it is affectionately desired that all may be careful how they encourage persons of improper dispositions to trouble superior meetings therewith.

If any be dissatisfied with, or think themselves aggrieved by the judgment of a Monthly Meeting, they may, after a copy of the testimony of disownment is delivered to them, or left at their dwelling, notify the first or second Monthly Meeting following, (but not after,) of their intention of appealing to the ensuing Quarterly Meeting: which notification the Monthly Meeting should enter on minute, and appoint a committee to attend the Quarterly Meeting, with a copy of the proceedings relative to the case, signed by the clerk; there to show the reasons on which that judgment was founded: the Quarterly Meeting is then to refer the same to a committee of Friends, omitting those of the Monthly Meeting from whence it came; and they are to confirm or reverse the judgment, as on impartial examination, shall appear to be right, except they find that the case has not been acted on in the Monthly Meeting according to Discipline; and if so, it is to be returned to the Monthly Meeting of such proceedings for re-examination; taking care to inform the appellant of the result.

If any appellant, on being informed of the judgment of a Quarterly Meeting, shall be dissatisfied therewith, he or she may notify that, or the next Quarterly Meeting, (but not after,) of his or her intention of applying to the next Yearly Meeting for a re-hearing; the said Quarterly Meeting, after recording such notification, is, in like manner, to appoint a committee to attend the Yearly Meeting, with copies of the records of the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings in the case, signed by the clerks. Here it is to be finally determined, except they find the proceedings have not been acted on according to Discipline by the Monthly or Quarterly Meeting; in which case it is to be returned to the Meeting of such proceedings for re-examination; but if the judgment of the Quarterly Meeting be confirmed, a copy of the determination is to be sent thereto, and from thence to the Monthly Meeting. Notices of appeals are to be forwarded from subordinate to superior meetings, in the regular reports of such meetings.

It is our earnest solicitude, that Friends may maintain the Discipline of the church in the spirit of the gospel, which breathes "peace on earth, and good will to men." Under the influence of this, they will be favored with wisdom prudently to determine the affairs of Society, and thereby be more likely to prevent appeals coming to the

Yearly Meeting, which, besides tending to prolong it, sometimes occasion uneasiness to the body.

CONCLUSION.

Finally, Friends, collectively and individually, may all our meetings be held as in the immediate presence of the Great Head of the Church. May the aged in Christ be encouraged to keep the word of his patience, maintaining their watch as servants in waiting; knowing Him, amidst the infirmities of their declining years, to lift them above every wave of discouragement, with the sweet assurance that their redemption draweth nigh. May the middle-aged be stirred up to continued diligence, calling often to remembrance the days of their early visitations and the vows of their espousals; and especially guarding against the benumbing, deadening influence of the earthly mind. Now is your time, dear Friends, to labor, and to prove your faithfulness to your Lord; let not the sun go down upon you before your work is done. And for you, beloved younger Friends, who have enjoyed many privileges both in your training and in your education, greatly do we desire that you may be encouraged to devote yourselves, with all earnestness, to the service of your Lord and Redeemer, and that all that you have, and all that you are, may be sanctified to

his use. And in the end, in the Lord's unmerited mercy, may it be given to all, of every age and condition, through heartfelt subjection to the powerful work of redeeming love, to have their part in the unspeakable blessedness of them that enter in through the gates into the city of God, to go no more out for ever.





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